

DARK DEEDS IN THE TSAR'S DOMINIONS

By
Fred
Whishaw

"I know," wrote Voltaire, "that Catherine the Great is reproached with certain trifles about her husband; but these are family affairs with which I do not meddle."

The husband here referred to was Peter III, Emperor of Russia for a few months, and grandson of no less a personage than Peter the Great. As for the "trifles," one of these at least is of some importance since it provides us with a subject for one of the darkest deeds that history has to relate; the story of the Tsar's deposal and death, the one following the other within a week. The Tsaritsa had carefully prepared her coup d'etat. One morning, accompanied by a large army, encouraged by the plaudits of an entire population—who had not the slightest idea of her intentions—blessed by the dignitaries of the Church, and licensed by the senators and counselors, the Great Catherine rode from St. Petersburg to Oranienbaum, a distance of twenty miles, in order to surprise and depose her husband the Tsar, who preferred to spend his time in that pleasant country residence as far from the cares of state as though he had been twenty times that distance from the capital, for he loved not to be worried.

PETER'S ABDICATION.

The surprise was complete. Peter quickly abdicated. There was no interval of time between the deposition of the husband and wife, at which the terms of abdication, as dictated by Catherine, were agreed to and signed, and the day ended with Catherine sole ruler and autocrat of all the Russias. So far there was no great harm done, for Peter was an incompetent and impossible person, and the Russians undoubtedly gained by the change of sovereigns.

But, as Catherine herself relates, the deposed Emperor was now sent by her orders, under the commands of Alexis Orlov (brother of her prime favorite of the moment, Gregory Orlov) and a detachment of "quiet and reasonable persons," to Ropsha, a small country place some fifteen miles from Peterhof, and here, within a few days, her husband died "of internal troubles," to which he was subject, and which "flow to the brain." So runs the official version.

But the Tsar did not die of "violent colic," as the Russian minister thought it his duty to inform the then English ambassador. His end was one of those "family affairs" with which Voltaire declined to meddle; his death was undoubtedly desirable to Catherine at the moment for dynastic and political reasons, and he died. Whether Catherine actually planned the murder beforehand, as some think, or did not desire the catastrophe, as others declare, need not here be considered. At any rate the murders were her personal affairs and their position in her regard was rather strengthened than diminished after the event.

THE MURDER OF A TSAR.

The Tsar sat in his prison chamber. Having been deprived of his favorite companions, male and female, of his usual occupations, such as duck-shooting over the Oranienbaum marshes, and the consumption of enormous quantities of English beer and Burgundy, his Majesty was in the worst of humors when to him there entered silently two men, officers. One of these was a huge fellow, a man well known at court for his strength and a certain rude comeliness which had endeared him to Catherine, in whose eyes, indeed, there existed but one dearer—his brother Gregory.

Peter looked up sulkily. "Alexis Orlov!" he exclaimed, hastily rising to his feet; "oh, and who is the second? Doubtless another of the Tsaritsa's pet lambs. Well, sir, what is your business, and why carry you naked swords?"

"This is Tyeplof, sire; we come at her Majesty's request upon matters connected with the change of government, and as for our swords, we carry them in order to enforce by their assistance the command of our beloved sovereign."

"Tell your mistress," cried the Tsar, "that I will discuss high matters of state with ministers, but not with lieutenants of the guard whose names are a byword in her shameless court."

"Beware, sire," said Orlov, "for I have sworn, and so has Tyeplof, that if this discussion does not go her Majesty's way it shall go ours."

"And what way is that?" asked Peter haughtily. Orlov glanced at his sword, but said nothing.

The Tsar suddenly shouted aloud, raising his voice—

"Guard!" he cried. "I am threatened—but no one answered the Tsar's cry. Then he knew that he was betrayed, and the bitter indignation from which he had suffered in comparative silence for several days found vent in a passion of anger.

"Aha! I understand!" he shouted. "You have come to murder an unarmed man—have at you, villains—defend, Orlov, coward and woman-hunter!" The Tsar seized the wooden chair upon which he had been seated and struck furiously at Orlov, who defended himself with his sword. Tyeplof stood watching, pale but determined.

Peter, like his grandfather, the great Tsar, was by nature a coward; that is, he hated danger and avoided it instinctively; but, once roused, and having made up his mind to face the peril, he would forget his fears and fight like a lion possessed. So furiously did he attack Orlov that in spite of the giant's strength and brute courage he contrived to dash the weapon, presently, from his hand.

Seeing that his big companion was in danger Tyeplof now aimed a huge blow at the stool which Peter was in the act of raising for a second great blow, which would have smashed Orlov's skull. The chair fell from the Tsar's hands, leaving him defenseless. At the same moment Orlov dashed, lured, handed upon his opponent, and fixed his tremendous grip upon the throat of the Tsar. Together the two men fell, the giant above, fastened to his victim by that godless, cruel clutch of his great hands, and so the pair rolled and struggled upon the floor.

Tyeplof stood above them, ready to smite at opportunity. Orlov, glancing up, saw him watching and bade him put up his sword.

"We will shed no blood," he said; "it is needless; his strength is nearly done."

Good folks in Russia formed their own conclusions as to the fate of the Tsar Peter. Among the rest the young Grand Duke Paul formed his. Paul was the son of Catherine and acknowledged Peter as his father, and knowing, or at any rate being convinced, that his father had been murdered, and that the Tsaritsa had a hand in the crime, the Grand Duke feared and hated his mother, who reciprocated the sentiment to the full. When Catherine hated, the object of her dislike went in terror, and so it was with Paul, her son. For thirty-four years he walked in terror of his life, which fact must be taken into consideration when one thinks with amazement of the numberless follies and eccentricities

ties he contrived to crowd afterward into his short reign.

Catherine's spite against her husband had not ended with his death; she had carried it beyond the grave, decreeing that since the late Tsar had not lived to be crowned his body could not rest among those of his predecessors in the fortress church of St. Peter and St. Paul. Consequently he had been buried in the monastery of St. Alexander Nefsky, a few miles out of the town. This circumstance had filled her son Paul and had preyed upon him ever since. One with the greatest indignation at the time of his very first acts on coming to the throne, and almost, indeed, before the breath had left his mother's body, was to set right, according to his eccentric judgment, the wrong and injustice which had been done by Catherine to her unfortunate husband thirty-four years ago.

The first step was to disinter and open the coffin of his late Majesty, presumably with the intention of discovering, if possible, some evidence of the violent treatment to which the Tsar had been subjected. But the grim inspection was a failure. All that remained of the Tsar was a pair of rusty spurs and a few metal buttons, together with a decayed scrap or two of his military boots. The rest was dust. Back went the lid in haste, and the curtain fell upon the first act of the comedy. Then the coffin was made fast and placed within a new and magnificent receptacle exactly similar to that in which the mortal remains of Catherine had but yesterday been laid, pending interment. This was the prelude to a certain pious act of justice and respect which Paul had long intended to pay his murdered father so soon as ever the death of Catherine should set him free to do as he pleased.

A GRISLY CORONATION.

The function upon which the Tsar had set his mind was not simply the reinterment of his father's remains together with those of his mother—though this was a part of his scheme. The late Tsar must first be crowned. This would qualify him for burial in the imperial mausoleum of St. Peter and Paul. This done, the Tsar Paul would bury husband and wife together with equal honors and ceremony, victim and murderer in the same grave.

Nor was this all. Those still surviving who, directly or indirectly, had contributed to the deposal and death of the Tsar, should now be the chief actors in the great and pious act of reparation. Among these survivors was Alexis Orlov, over whose guilty head thirty-four years had passed since the day when, as a young man of scarce thirty years, he had used his giant strength to rid his adored Tsaritsa of a husband who was certainly an obstacle in her path. To Alexis, now an old man well on in his sixties, were apportioned the chief "honors" in the weird and fantastic ceremony which represented Paul's crude and evil-tasting attempt to set right an undoubted wrong.

A solemn midnight procession was now for the conveyance of the Imperial regalia from palace to monastery. The cold said to have been absolutely arctic on this occasion, and the suffering to all concerned in the function was considerable, for the rate of progression was slow, the night pitch dark, while the street lamps afforded scarcely any light at the best of times—by reason of the frost.

At the monastery the crown and regalia were placed upon the coffin and a coronation service was solemnly chanted by priests and choir, Paul himself sobbing and weeping loudly throughout.

And now came the principal and crowning act of this foolish yet pathetic ceremony: a grand procession from monastery to palace, that the coffin of his late Imperial Majesty Peter III might lie in state for a while beside that of his consort, the Great Catherine, and that the two might be buried together in the sacred soil reserved for the interment of the Romanoffs within the four walls of the Petro-Pauline church of the fortress.

In this procession Orlov was compelled to walk as chief mourner and to carry the imperial crown which had been denied to his victim in life. Old, ill and infirm, the wretched man limped and tottered beneath his burden, staggering under the weight of it, actually falling now and again, but all unperturbed by his stern taskmaster, to other survivors of the revolution of Catherine were apportioned parts in the grim comedy of the day, as pallbearers, as chief mourners, as bearers of the regalia and the Imperial orders and decorations of the dead Tsar, and so at last Orlov, more dead than alive with fatigue and shame, the procession reached the palace and the dismal function was over.

Side by side the two coffins were laid in state upon an enormous catafalque, and side by side eventually they were lowered into their last resting place. To each coffin was affixed a silver plate, on which was inscribed the date of the burial of the Imperial pair, together with the dates of their respective births and of their marriage, but not of their deaths. Those unacquainted with the circumstances visiting the fortress church and observing the identity of date of burial of this blessed pair of lovers may well feel charmed at the apparent evidence here given of a truly happy married life, and will perhaps repeat with exultation and chaste satisfaction a very beautiful and apparently well-fitting quotation, than which nothing could in fact be less appropriate: "Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their death they were not divided."

A TRAGIC ENDING.

There is a third act to this Imperial tragedy. The Emperor Paul, having begun his reign in the eccentric and graceless manner just recorded, continued in the same way. He meant well, but his mind was out of focus; terror, a quarter of a century of it, had made him mad. Imagine him through those thirty years of waiting

at Gatchina, a prisoner though nominally free; uncertain from day to day when his mother would send her accomplices to strangle the breath out of his body as they had strangled his father; that she would one day dispatch them for this purpose he was assured. What wonder that his reason tottered and that as Cesar he scarcely performed a single act of his duty as emperor? What wonder that he alienated friends and adherents daily until the most friendless, the most lonely man in all the vast empire was his head.

The people were outraged and offended from the very first. The gruesome coronation ceremony at St. Alexander Monastery did not appeal to them; it was revolting to their sense of the fitness of things. The Cesar had made an ugly and graceless start. What was to be expected of a monarch who began in this fashion?

As a matter of fact he went from bad to worse. He bullied his subjects and offended them by many useless and aggravating regulations. Ladies were forced to kneel in the mud or snow when he drove by. Those who failed to recognize his Majesty were compelled by the police to wear spectacles for a year. There were a thousand other similar regulations, equally foolish and equally aggravating.

Paul's fate was remarkably like that of his father. In the case of the late Cesar, Catherine, discovering that her husband was impossible, and constituted "an obstacle to the prosperity of the nation," took the law into her own hands, and Peter died suddenly. Paul, having shown himself incapable of a dangerous to the welfare of his people, died also, and in an equal suddenness. In his case his successor, his son Alexander I, was innocent of his death. The people whom he had alienated and offended—they were his judges. The end came under the cloak of a demand for the Cesar's abdication. On the 23d of March, 1801, the Cesar, annoyed by the indecision of the Russian King, whom he had pressed to declare in favor of his darling project, a Russo-French combination against England, sent a message to his minister in Berlin to put a stop to the indecision of Prussia by a threat of war. To this message Count Pahlen, an exalted official of the court of the Cesar, and the center of the conspiracy, took upon himself to add a postscript which ran thus: "His Majesty is not well to-day, his illness may have results of great importance." From this we may infer that the count knew something.

That night the Semenovskiy Regiment was on guard at the palace. Pahlen himself was on duty in the ante-chamber of the Tsar's bedroom; the officers of the Semenovskys were safe, every one of them was in the plot. There was no hitch. In the dead of night three determined men, Beningsen, Zouboff and Francis Yashval, entered the imperial sleeping chamber and awoke the sleeper. Paul sprang out of bed, and asked the meaning of the intrusion. Beningsen replied by silently handing to the Tsar a document the voluntary abdication of Paul in favor of his son, Alexander, together with a pen for signature. No one spoke a word while Beningsen handed the paper and the Tsar glanced over it.

Paul's fury, sudden and without warning he commenced a wild and furious attack upon the nearest of the conspirators. Instantly the small lamp was upset and the room was left in pitch darkness. Then Zouboff or Yashval, or both, fell upon the Tsar and threw him to the ground; one of them strangling the wretched Imperial victim with his officer's scarf. His Majesty made a desperate fight of it to the end, but was speedily overpowered. The Romanoffs have ever shown that they possess a good spirit in emergency.

Next week:

"Chinese Marriage Customs," by Ka Jit-Bin.

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 8.—The contractors have notified the Navy Department that the new submarine boats Moccasin and Adder will be ready for their official trials on Nov. 10, and the trials will begin as soon afterward as the trial board is ready. Many improvements have been made in the new boats over the Holland, the only one which the American navy now possesses, and the trials are of a character calculated to demonstrate the superiority of the Adder and Moccasin beyond question. The new vessels are sixty-three feet four inches in length, compared to fifty-three feet ten inches for the Holland. In diameter they are eleven feet nine inches, against ten feet three inches, and they will have a displacement of 122 tons submerged, against seventy-four tons for the Holland. The latter makes about six knots an hour on the surface and five and one-half knots submerged, with a gas engine of fifty-horse power for surface running and a fifty-horse power electric motor for propulsion when submerged. The new vessels will have a gas engine of 100 horse power and an electric motor of seventy horse power, while the batteries will have a capacity of 1,300 ampere hours, more than double the capacity of the Holland batteries. Three Whitehead torpedoes are carried by the Holland, while the new boats will carry five.

United States experts will watch the trials with great interest, as opinion is divided as to the place of the submarine in the naval programme of this country, while they will be regarded with scarcely less interest by the representatives of foreign powers. England has adopted the American model and has ordered as many as the United States, and H. O. Arnold-Forster, parliamentary secretary of the British Admiralty, at a dinner given by the Conservative Club of Liverpool recently, at which he was the guest of honor, in outlining the naval programme of Great Britain, said the incorporation of submarine boats was to be taken up with energy, indicating that the trials of the English boats had been entirely satisfactory.

The smaller countries of the world are turning to submarine boats with the hope of being able to protect their harbors by them, the enormous cost of first-class battleships and cruisers prohibiting their having a navy composed of these vessels. Norway has adopted the American model, and Holland and Portugal are negotiating for American-built submarines. Brazil, Venezuela and other countries are awaiting the results of the trials. Heretofore, when the submarine was regarded in somewhat the light of a toy, the Navy Department permitted inspection of the Holland, but a change in policy has been inaugurated. Portugal recently requested permission for officers of her army and marine to witness the trials and inspect the boats. Secretary Moody granted the former, but stipulated they should confine their inspection to the "exterior" of the vessels.

In general design the new vessels follow the Holland, but the experience gained with her has permitted many improvements to be incorporated in the new boats. Without sacrificing handiness the increase in dimensions and displacement has enabled the designers to provide much more roomy and habitable vessels with an improved armament and a very considerable increase in speed and radii of action. The extra power provided allows the batteries or air tanks to be recharged while proceeding at a speed of about six knots on the surface. When the Holland was an official trial before being purchased by the government she was required only to demonstrate her "ability to run awash at good speed; ability to dive and rise readily and with certainty; ability to run under water at depths from ten to thirty-five feet for ten minutes at a speed of about six knots per hour, while maintaining a reasonably steady course, both in the vertical and horizontal planes; ability to maneuver with quickness and certainty, and the possession of sufficient apparatus for raising, lowering and trimming the vessel and handling and firing torpedoes."

The new boats will be required to make sixteen runs on the surface under the gas engine only, over a one-mile course, half the runs with the tide and half against. The average speed of eight knots must be attained on these runs. Awash, the boats will make six runs of a mile with the tide and an equal number against it, the average speed to equal seven knots, the gas engine only being used.

In a completely submerged condition the boats will be obliged to carry the crew and two observers from the trial board, and no portion of the boat is to be exposed, but a light mast may be carried to show above the surface, so the trial board can observe the times of passing the ranges. On these trials the boats will make four runs for each of the three different speeds, over a course of one-half a nautical mile in length, two with and two against the tide, the average speed to equal eight knots. Over a course of ten knots the vessels will be required to make eight knots an hour on the surface and seven knots awash.

In the torpedo trials the vessels will be required to run two miles under water and at the finish discharge a torpedo which will strike a target 150 feet long by fifteen feet deep, placed across the course, representing the vital part of a battleship. During this run the vessel is not to rise from the surface more than three times from the time of starting until the discharge of the torpedo, the duration of each period of observation not to exceed one minute.

The endurance trials will consist of a surface run of twelve hours' duration at full speed of eight knots under the gasoline engine and one of three hours, hermetically sealed, under the electric motor, at seven knots an hour. It is understood that this trial will be made under conditions simulating as closely as possible those ruling in actual service in warfare.

During these speed and endurance trials the vessels must demonstrate all the submarine qualities required of the Holland. Sustained speed trials of ordinary surface torpedo boats and destroyers are one hour's duration and of battleships of four hours' duration, so that it will be seen that a greater proportion of the capabilities of these novel vessels will be demonstrated by actual trial than is the case for older and well-known types.

The Journal's Poets.

O Be Merry!

Do clouds that wheel forever
Across an arch of blue
Know aught of earth's endeavor
To drink the dark and dew?
Do shadows read deep under
The hills that rest and dream,
Or ask in somber wonder
The secret of the stream?
And do the winters tarry?
And do the summers stay?
Nay, nature says: "Be merry!
For all things pass away!"

If troubles hover o'er us,
And foes must yet appear,
New friends are still before us,
Some favor ever near;
We cannot know what's in store,
For wisdom has not said,
But in our trust may, therefore,
Life's riddle leave unread,
And helping one another
Down to the final day,
Find earth is still the mother
To drive dull care away!

We have our pure ambitions,
Our passions bending low;
Behind us old traditions,
Truth everywhere we go;
And, though we gain high places,
Rare jewels and red gold,
The rapture in glad faces
Is never bought or sold.
So work that will not weary,
Though riches do not stay,
Winning the time less dreary
And drive dull care away.

O who would not have gladness,
Wine, music and a feast
To chase away the sadness
That comes unto the least?
But peace is still the guardian
Of summer's golden hours,
And from toil's heavy burden
This hidden hint comes down—
That pleasure lies in doing,
In reaping while we may—
Some good for aye pursuing
Will drive dull care away.

Warrensburg, Mo. —Charles W. Stevenson.

The World Within.

Passes slowly from the dawning west,
And the pale moon, with silver rays,
Looks down upon the world at rest,
And far above in azure realms
The stars shine from the heights sublime,
We hark with joy the quiet night,
For earnest thought a fitting time.

A myrtle curtain Nature draws
About the moments that seem given
To meditate upon the themes
That draw the spirit nearer heaven.
It is, indeed, a season blest;
Oft memories of other years
Come like the dower's balmy breath
Till we forget our cares and fears.

Unto the world within the soul
Turns from life's ranking strife away,
Recalls, perchance, some vision bright
That shone upon a bygone day;
Or muses on the happiness
That in the future shall be given,
When friend with friend shall meet again
To say "good-bye," no more, in heaven.

But when the fountains of the heart
Are poisoned by the chilling breath
Of thoughts and deeds that savor not
Of life, but of the way of death,
The haunted spirit, though it strive
To seek rest in forgetfulness,
May often search, yet all in vain,
The world within for happiness.

The conscience must be free from guilt;
The soul unfettered by desires
For the unhallowed things of earth
That grow to strong consuming fires;
Else it can never fully share
The joy that in this narrow span
The Father of our souls designs
Should be the heritage of man.

The past is but in thought recalled;
Vague, shadowy dreams the future shows,
No boldest flight of fancy yet
Did ever coming days disclose.
The present moments we may claim,
The purest joys of life to win,
That peace and love may glory
With light divine the world within.

Liberty, Ind. —Eliza L. Brown.

Loving Vainly.

I love you; I adore you!
If you loved me half as well,
Your lips to me confessing it,
Would truth and feeling tell.
But you have never loved me,
You never could nor can;
I sought your love but vainly,
I'm not the happy man.

You cannot help my loving you;
This love of mine a part,
Has made this earth a paradise
And lived within my heart.
You cannot bid me hope and wait
For days and months and years,
I know I have your pity;
You turn to hide your tears.

I ask not for your pity,
Nor see your tear drops fall;
I craved the love you had to give,
No longer yours, I know.
You look on me impatiently,
I look on you with pain;
On one you look with favored smiles—
He has not loved in vain.

Good-bye! Farewell, my darling!
Your hand once more my sweet;
The parting's night, then say good-bye,
We never may meet.

Farewell! Adieu, my darling!
Wherever I may be,
Or come what will, or good or ill,
I shall remember thee.

I would that you could say the same,
But wherefore should you speak—
I note the dimness of your eye,
The paleness of your cheek?

Good-bye, dear love, I will be brave;
As friends we two must part;
The paths we take divided lie,
And very far apart.

Indiana. —Dora Klusman Freaney.

A Race Royal.

The sea wind and a gull—
Gray-winged and strong of flight—
Went racing o'er the land
In autumn's mellow light.
It was a royal race,
And, wing and wing, together,
The sea wind and the gull
Sped through the golden weather.

League by league they battled
Beneath the purple sky,
Each vainly strove for vantage
His rival to outfly.
The blind night overtook them,
But on they sped, and on,
Unconscious of this danger,
In the silent, cold gray dawn.

Alas, for wind and bird
And for their foolish pride;
The wind wept for the sea
And the gray gull for the tide.
The land was bare and brown—
The ocean far away,
And 'neath that alien sky
None was so sad as they.

The sea wind found a wood
Where the leaves were crisp and sear,
And there it moaned and died
With the autumn of the year.
A Fowler marked the gull
And tore its downy breast,
And thus the race was ended—
With wind and bird at rest.

Indiana. —Bergna Weeks Applegate.

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And helping one another
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Find earth is still the mother
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We have our pure ambitions,
Our passions bending low;
Behind us old traditions,
Truth everywhere we go;
And, though we gain high places,
Rare jewels and red gold,
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Is never bought or sold.
So work that will not weary,
Though riches do not stay,
Winning the time less dreary
And drive dull care away.

O who would not have gladness,
Wine, music and a feast
To chase away the sadness
That comes unto the least?
But peace is still the guardian
Of summer's golden hours,
And from toil's heavy burden
This hidden hint comes down—
That pleasure lies in doing,
In reaping while we may—
Some good for aye pursuing
Will drive dull care away.

Warrensburg, Mo. —Charles W. Stevenson.

The World Within.

Passes slowly from the dawning west,
And the pale moon, with silver rays,
Looks down upon the world at rest,
And far above in azure realms
The stars shine from the heights sublime,
We hark with joy the quiet night,
For earnest thought a fitting time.

A myrtle curtain Nature draws
About the moments that seem given
To meditate upon the themes
That draw the spirit nearer heaven.
It is, indeed, a season blest;
Oft memories of other years
Come like the dower's balmy breath
Till we forget our cares and fears.

Unto the world within the soul
Turns from life's ranking strife away,
Recalls, perchance, some vision bright
That shone upon a bygone day;
Or muses on the happiness
That in the future shall be given,
When friend with friend shall meet again
To say "good-bye," no more, in heaven.

But when the fountains of the heart
Are poisoned by the chilling breath
Of thoughts and deeds that savor not
Of life, but of the way of death,
The haunted spirit, though it strive
To seek rest in forgetfulness,
May often search, yet all in vain,
The world within for happiness.

The conscience must be free from guilt;
The soul unfettered by desires
For the unhallowed things of earth
That grow to strong consuming fires;
Else it can never fully share
The joy that in this narrow span
The Father of our souls designs
Should be the heritage of man.

The past is but in thought recalled;
Vague, shadowy dreams the future shows,
No boldest flight of fancy yet
Did ever coming days disclose.
The present moments we may claim,
The purest joys of life to win,
That peace and love may glory
With light divine the world within.

Liberty, Ind. —Eliza L. Brown.

Loving Vainly.

I love you; I adore you!
If you loved me half as well,
Your lips to me confessing it,
Would truth and feeling tell.
But you have never loved me,